The Critical Impact of Leadership on Family Resiliency

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS COMBAT & OPERATIONAL STRESS CONFERENCE 2010:
"TAKING ACTION, MEASURING RESULTS"

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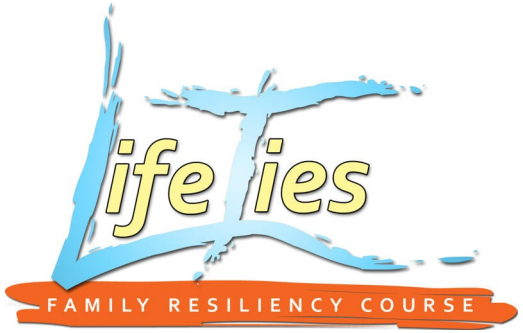
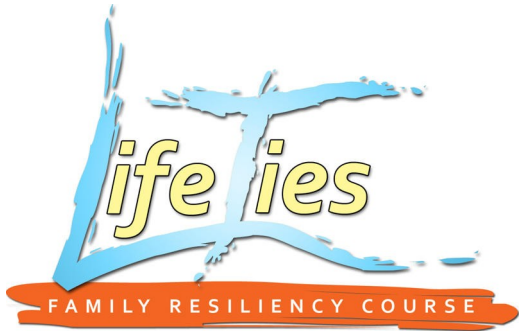
Objectives

- Highlight Resilient Family Traits.
- Discuss Specific Leadership Traits.
- Putting these Traits into Action.
- How these actions enhance Family Resiliency?
- What's in it for me?

Resiliency Based Curriculum



Key Resilient Family Traits



- Family Unity/Bonding
- Resourcefulness
- Support Networks
- Communication
- Problem Solving

Leadership Traits/Skills Enhancing Family Resiliency

- Mentor family care
- Allowing greater control
- Communication
- Listening
- Unit Activities
- Familiarization with the unit and unit culture

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Leadership impacting home

- Group-level leadership and support for spouses was associated with decreased levels of intimate partner violence.
- Primary prevention of intimate partner violence can be influenced by the company commander and chain of command.

-**The Effects of Peer Group Climate on Intimate Partner Violence among Married Male U.S. Army Soldiers. *Violence Against Women* 2003; 9:1045**

Family Resiliency

- Family Resiliency Trait
- Impacted Family Unity, Flexibility, Family Hardiness (Control)

Family Receives information

- Service member shares information after family vacation is announced
- Morale of service member and family impacted

Training Exercise

- Leadership Trait of Communication
- Leader waiting longer than necessary to announce up coming training

Family Resiliency as a Buffer

- Military life inherently has high levels of stress
- Resiliency is a state of mind, but is not permanent state. Your actions as a leader can "buffer" the amount of stress impacting their lives

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Leadership Skills in Action

Leader Actions

- Family Resiliency Traits

Welcome Letter to Families New to the Unit

- Family Unity
- Support Networks
- Communication

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So what does this mean?

- Investing in the leadership training to change a culture

Leadership vs. Services

- Greater satisfaction with services was associated with a more positive attitude about the family supportiveness of the unit culture

- Maintenance of a high quality family life in the context of these demands, was enhanced where units and their leadership were recognized as supportive and concerned about families under stress.

- **Pittman, Joe (2004) Internal and External Adaptation in Army Families**

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Leadership impacting families

- Spouse's ability to cope with deployment is not solely a fixed trait based on personality but something that is malleable and related to being "well connected" to their military
- These findings communicate to military leadership that various levels of support do in fact make a difference in families' lives when it counts most.

Not accessing services

- **"We have so many opportunities out there for them, but they are not taking advantage because they don't see a need," Brig. Gen. Colleen McGuire of the Army Suicide Prevention Task Force said. "They don't recognize it in themselves“**

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Investing in our future

- As we face budget cutbacks and shortfalls we need to evaluate a culture change
- As more programs are offered, we will begin to expect them, but can they sustain?

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Culture change is permanent

- Leadership investment is permanent and the training is already in place.

Summary

- Leaderships impact on families has been consistently shown in research
- Incorporating tools and techniques as part of training is a long-term investment in the military culture.
- This positively impacts the unit, retention, and less budget impacts.

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